

in your green copy would have extended the table from the bottom to the top the unemployment schedule, and what that would have done is I think probably been the right way to do it, the best way, but the amendment that you find on page 1200 is a compromise. It in essence extends the unemployment table that we are used to doing. It has been done in the past. Basically what it does is it says we will allow people who are making a higher wage to receive a benefit closer to 50 percent of their average salary, average weekly benefit. The amendment as you see it raises the maximum from \$120 to \$154 per week. Unemployment, as you know, is federal law. It is a federal tax. The state administers the law and the employer pays the tax and the employee must qualify for the benefit. Currently we are at \$120, a maximum dollar amount allowed. Even though we are at \$120, in the State of Nebraska last year, in 1984, the average benefit was \$99 and some change. This bill, this amendment would extend the table in \$50 increments and increase the workmen's unemployment to \$2. Not everybody draws the maximum. In fact like I said, we are looking at \$99 and some change last year. With the proposed increase in the amendment to \$154, we would increase the average benefit approximately \$13, excuse me, approximately \$14. So that even though our benefit this year is at \$120, with the amendment to \$154, the average weekly benefit amount would be raised to \$113. It just...I have handed out also an amendment or, excuse me, a handout and you can see on there, one of the things I pointed out earlier was that you had to, as an employee you had to qualify. In the State of Nebraska, we are the most difficult state in the union in which to qualify for unemployment benefits. I guess what that means is that our Department of Labor does an excellent job in determining who qualifies and who doesn't. Nebraska is four times more difficult to qualify for unemployment compensation than the national average. You will see on the chart that I handed out that we go off the chart. We are at 113 percent in terms of disqualifications while the national average is 28.2. Just to counter the argument that I am sure is going to come up that with an increase we are going to let the individuals who are making minimum wage, 3.35 an hour, give them an incentive to stay home rather than to work. I think that if you break it down you will find that, one, people are legally required to look for work and, basically, the weekly benefit amount is not enough to live on. Minimum wage, 3.35 an hour, for someone who is working full time, they would gross \$134 a week. They would net